

Salmon River Restoration Council
Salmon River Educational Events FY 00 – Final Report – Date 9/30/00

Agreement # 14-48-11333-00-G005 Project #2000-E-02
Period Covered 8/1/00 to 9/30/00

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A) Abstract

The Restoration Council has performed the tasks identified in our cooperative agreement for the Salmon River Educational Events for the Fiscal Year 2000 (FY 00). During FY 00, the SRRC enlisted community members in specific educational projects. In FY 00, the SRRC were cooperators in a series of Fishery Surveys and Fire Awareness Workshops and Workdays in the Salmon River subbasin that focused on: 1) Fall Chinook Salmon Population and Spawning Ground Surveys, 2) Fire Management, 3) Winter Steelhead Population Surveys, 4) Spring Chinook and Summer Steelhead Population Dive Surveys. Staff and community support also represented SRRC in a number of project/resource monitoring efforts, meeting with and providing information to government agencies, local tribes and resource user outreach efforts. In the four events there were 207 person days expended to help restore the Salmon River subbasin by community, staff, and the Salmon River Volunteer Fire and Rescue (see appendices IV: Volunteer Participation Log). At \$10 an hour plus the value of implied benefits (at 12.81%), the value of community in-kind service contribution was \$12,341.41 of which \$3,931.26 was attributed to this agreement. There was also community donated mileage valued at \$760.74 attributed to this agreement. There were also 8 person days associated with the Educational Events in which private and public specialists provided invaluable assistance in keeping with our commitment to the educational aspects of fisheries restoration. Community cooperation and support is expanding and compliments SRRC's work in bringing together various stakeholders in the sub-basin to prioritize and implement needed restoration activities. In addition to increasing awareness this project has trained several community members in the skills to become better watershed stewards.

B) Introduction

In the Salmon River sub-basin the Salmon River Restoration Council (SRRC) has taken the lead role in heightening local community awareness and enlisting local support to rehabilitate the anadromous fisheries and the related resources. Our mission is to assess, protect, restore, and maintain the Salmon River ecosystems, focusing on the restoration of the anadromous fisheries resources. Since 1992, SRRC initiators have planned and implemented an annual series of volunteer Fishery Surveys and Fire Awareness Workshops. Community members, technical assistant have contributed over 5,500 volunteer days, and other supporters in the planning and implementation of over 250 SRRC sponsored Workshops and Workdays. Ways to reduce negative impacts connected to various resource uses are being identified and utilized in areas such as: fishing, mining, forest management, grazing, recreation, road management, noxious weeds and residential use.

For the past 9 years, the SRRC has participated in Salmon and Steelhead population and habitat surveys. In FY-2000 there were over 151 volunteer person days associated with these surveys (including training) that were contributed by community members and other supporters.

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C) Description of Study Area

The Salmon River is one of the major subbasins in the Klamath River Basin. The 751 sq. mile watershed is entirely within the Klamath National Forest. Four communities lie widely dispersed within this watershed. There are approximately 250 people residing in the drainage. The Salmon River has long been known for its exceptionally high quality waters and high value fisheries as well as boasting one of the richest regions of species diversity in the temperate zones. In comparison to most rivers in the west, the Salmon River still retains large areas of high quality habitat for anadromous fish. It is noted to have the largest population of Spring Chinook Salmon in California. There are both Summer and Winter runs of native Klamath Province Steelhead. A smaller run of Coho salmon is also present. In general, coniferous tree associations that change with elevations characterize the headwaters of the Salmon River. The major forest types have various understory elements that characterize them specifically, depending on soil type and exposure.

The Salmon River watershed is one of the highest risk fire areas on the Klamath National Forest. It has a high natural frequency of lightning occurrence. In recent years the Offield Fire (1973) burned the area near the river confluence. The Hog Fire (1977) burned extensively in the lower North and South Fork watershed and in Nordheimer and Crapo Creeks. The total area was about 80,000 acres. In 1987, wildfires burned 90,900 acres in four separate areas, covering much of the Salmon River subbasin. In 1994, the Specimen fire burned approximately 7,500 acres in the Specimen and Little North Fork Drainages of the North Fork. It is estimated that 29% of the Salmon River subbasin has burned since the early 70s. Many acres of intact late successional forest and high value riparian habitat burned with high intensities, completely degrading the functional biological quality of these habitats.

Our community-based program is of particular significance in managing the Salmon River sub-basin because access to the district may also be viewed as a limiting factor. Managing agency personnel have to drive two or more hours just to get to the main roads. There are two high summits to go over on the access routes. The main Salmon River road is mostly a one-lane road with turnouts carved into the steep cliffs of the river corridor. This makes management activities expensive and sometimes prohibitively costly.

At present, fuel loading is at an unnaturally high hazard level in many areas of the watershed. This threatens to severely damage the more biologically intact or recovering landscapes in the sub-basin (Each of the USFS Watershed Analyses). Several Late Successional Reserves in the sub-basin have a high fire potential (USFS North Fork, Eddys, Carter Meadow/Taylor Late Successional Reserve (LSR) Assessments-1995&1996). The Karuk Tribe of California has presented information pointing to the fact that, A Fifty years of fire suppression has resulted in an ecosystem with accumulations of flammable debris capable of fueling future catastrophic fires within the watershed. (Karuk Tribal Module for the Main Stem Salmon River Watershed Analysis, Draft, June 25th, 1996).

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Without critical fuels management, one can easily predict that catastrophic wildfires will return more frequently in the Salmon River. **The fire history and fire potential of this sub-basin establish that increased catastrophic wildfire occurrence is the number one threat to fisheries and general ecosystem health and diversity.**

During 1997, the Salmon River experienced the largest high water event since the 1964 flood. Several roads and hillsides failed to maintain stable. In addition several miles of riparian habitat (particularly on the South Fork) were scoured, reducing shade over streams and sections of the river.

D) Methods & Materials

The Salmon River Restoration Council has performed the tasks identified in our cooperative agreement for Salmon River Educational Events for the Fiscal Year 2000 (FY 00). The SRRC continued to enlist community members in a variety of watershed restoration and protection activities. In FY 00, the SRRC in cooperation with managing agencies and local tribes held a series of Anadromous Fishery Population and Habitat Monitoring Surveys, Fishery Identification and Restoration Training Workshops and Workdays. Also in FY 00, SRRC hosted a weeklong community Fire Awareness Workshop emphasizing on Fire Training, Management Strategy and community fuels reduction workdays in cooperation with managing agencies and local tribes and the Salmon River Vol. Fire & Rescue Dept.

Public Outreach

SRRC distributed announcements and information at key locations that serve as community information distribution points. These points are at the Forks of Salmon Post Office, Cecilville Post Office and Sawyers Bar Post Office. We have maintained current information and handouts at these and other points. Notices and informational announcements have also been posted at public bulletin boards in Somes Bar, Orleans, Happy Camp, Etna, Fort Jones, and Callahan. Various SRRC updates were provided to our Board of Directors, the community and other stakeholders including newsletters circulated periodically. In reaching out to managing and interested entities the SRRC held various field trips, trainings, workdays and gave several presentations to provide a general overview of the conditions and problems associated with watershed health in the Salmon River subbasin. Currently the SRRC web page is being updated with photos and data results from the completed fishery surveys. A Fire Awareness web page is also being finalized. A community events calendar was published monthly which included a tentative schedule of future trainings and survey dates for potential participants as well as related articles.

E) Results and Discussion of Accomplishments During the Project

1) Fall Chinook Salmon Carcass and Spawning Bed Cooperative Survey 1999

The count was low for this year's 1999 Cooperative Spawning Ground Survey for Fall Chinook and Coho Salmon (see appendices I). The Dept. of Fish and Game, USFS from Scott River, Salmon River, Klamath River, and Arcata, the Yurok Tribe, and SRRC completed another year

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of salmon surveying. During this project there were planning, groundwork, training and reporting activities for which SRRC was responsible. The survey went from 10/14/1999 thru 11/22/1999, there were 12 survey days total, 39 volunteer days, and 2 training days occurred for identification and white water safety.

All days went smoothly and were efficiently coordinated by SRRC. We covered sixteen 4 mile reaches totaling 768 miles. Our education aspect invited school students to extend their classroom to the outdoors. A total of 49 students and teacher days were spent attending surveys and training. School related participation went well as part of our program to increase awareness for this species and fish in general. We inspire our community to become active participants and understand the importance of fish life cycles to the Salmon River ecosystem.

2) Fire Awareness Week (Collaboration, Training, Planning, fuels reduction)

On April 24th and 25th, 2000 SRRC again co-sponsored Fire Awareness Training with the Karuk Tribe, KFA, the Salmon River Vol. Fire & Rescue Dept. and the USFS our objective were to improve fire strategy, preparedness and response and provide opportunities for agency personnel and community members to interact in an educational and work related setting. A focused discussion on fire planning and prioritized fuels reduction took place between various stakeholders- Forest Service, Karuk Tribe, Salmon River Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department. This discussion was helpfully in developing the Salmon River Fire Management Strategy Proposal that the SRRC has been encouraging.

From April 26th, through 28th community volunteers joined together with organizations to cleanup dangerous fuels in the three communities. This work has helped the SRRC accomplish its' goal of getting towns, neighborhoods, residences and the watershed ready for wildfire.

3) Winter Steelhead Trout Survey

In February the SRRC met with the Salmon River Collaborative Fisheries Group to plan the Winter Steelhead Trout Survey. The survey protocol and safety training took place at the Forks of Salmon Community Club building. SRRC provided professional training services and supervision. The SRRC's fisheries biologist, Toz Soto and education coordinator, Sue Maurer, as well US Forest Service fisheries technician trained several community volunteers. Toz Soto coordinated this task. There were 8 reaches visited by the survey crew and useful information was developed and shared with the members of the Fisheries Collaborative Work Group. During March and April SRRC performed the Winter Steelhead Trout Training and Survey. This activity has developed critical information for the resource managers, increased fisheries restoration awareness among the stakeholders, as well as expanding collaborative efforts. SRRC provided a total of 31 volunteer person days.

4) Spring Chinook and Summer Steelhead Dives

During the Week of July 17th, the Annual Cooperative Spring Chinook and Steelhead Population Survey was successfully and safely accomplished. This years survey was a couple weeks earlier than the previous three years. The survey occurred during the workweek rather than the weekend, and utilized experienced divers only. Participants from the local community and agency professionals were able to interact and see the fish. Coordination of this project included: attendance to a survey collaboration meeting discussing the planning of this event with local

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agencies, production of posters and mailings to invite volunteers, equipment check in and out of borrowed SRRC and agency equipment, assisting volunteers on choosing reaches and safety discussions, maintaining communication with agency personnel for their need of assistance and reporting. The Restoration Council provided 16 volunteer days and 2 staff members that participated in training and the dives. A total of 56 participants from the Karuk Tribe, Yurok Tribe, Cal. Dept. of Fish and Game from Arcata and Yreka, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from Arcata and Yreka, National Marine Fisheries Service from Arcata, Salmon River Ranger District, Klamath National Forest, Six Rivers NF, Shasta-Trinity NF, and SRRC participated in the survey. On the 17th experienced community volunteers participated in a successful Mainstem survey. On the 18th SRRC held a Fish Identification and Whitewater Safety Training for Novice divers and as a refresher for experienced divers for the community and agencies.

On the 19th and 20th, agencies, tribes, and community volunteers completed all desired reaches on the South and North Forks of the Salmon River.

The total count reached the 2nd lowest since surveys began, 202 adult Chinook Salmon, 22 Jack Salmon, 82 adult Steelhead and 182 half pounder Steelhead. On Wednesday night speaker, Eric Gursten a retired Biologist gave an interesting presentation on the trend of the Chinook salmon throughout California. The trend goes up and down and currently the Salmon population has been continuously going down for the past several years. If the trend holds true, and the dives continue, we will hopefully see the population climb back up in a few years. Also on Wednesday, Jennifer Silveira, of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Yreka gave a presentation on Harvest Allocations and how they determine them.

F) Summary and Conclusion

The objectives of this Special Educational Events Project were realized and the tasks completed in a timely and professional manner focused on the assessment and restoration of this watershed. Through our workshops, workdays, meetings, training, brochures, calendars, web page and presentations we have substantially increased public awareness and knowledge of key Salmon River Watershed resource issues. These activities promoted public and professional interest and involvement in fisheries related watershed restoration and protection. Our workshops in particular trained and directed volunteers in skills and topics directed toward these ends. In all the SRRC coordination and volunteers along with cooperating agencies successfully accomplished all goals proposed for the events held under this report. SRRC and cooperators will continue to participate and expand these events for as long as there are salmon and steelhead returning to the Salmon River. Our participation in these surveys help to provide research on the salmon and steelhead life cycles, population decline and increase, and habitat restoration. Local residents, students and visitors are given a rare opportunity to learn about and witness these species as they proficiently spawn in our river. Volunteers walk away from each season with a new outlook and heightened respect for these fish that impact their daily lives.

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G) Summary of Expenditures

Total funds allocated to SRRC for this project by USF&W: \$5,577.50

Total Salaries: \$3,060.000

- \$ 2,514.00 for the Project Coordinators (209 Hours @ \$12/Hr.)
- \$ 192.00 for the Secretary/Bookkeeper (16 hours @ \$12/hr)
- \$ 354.00 for staff benefits (payroll taxes & worker's comp ins.)

Total Expendable Equipment Materials & Supplies: \$1,050.00

- \$ 225.04 for Supplies
- \$ 509.62 for Educational Materials
- \$ 315.34 for Postage

Total Operating Expense: \$ 740.00

- \$ 325.26 for Travel & Transportation 1,049.226 @\$.31/mi
- \$ 116.83 for Telephone & Internet Costs
- \$ 104.25 for Printing & Reproduction
- \$ 193.66 for Equipment Rental

Total General and Administrative Expenses: \$ 727.50

- \$ 114.24 for Software
- \$ 582.00 for Bookkeeper for 48.5 hours @ \$12/hr
- \$ 31.26 for Workers Comp Insurance

H) Appendices of Collected Data

- Appendices I: 1999 Fall Carcass Survey Results
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- Appendices IV: Volunteer Participation Log - 2 pages
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